

CULTURAL VALUES

INDIAN

TIME

Time is relative. Clocks are not watched. One does things, as they are needed to be done. Often the family gets up as the sun rises and retires soon after the sun sets. "Indian Time" means when everyone gets there. A community meeting can be set for 1:00 p.m. and people will come as near that time as they wish. So the meeting may begin an hour or two later, and this bothers no one.

TODAY CONCEPT

Indian people generally live each day as it comes. Plans for tomorrow often are left until the future becomes the present.

PATIENCE

To have much patience and to wait is considered to be a good quality.

SHAME

The Indian groups often shame an individual, but once this is over, no guilty feeling is held by the individual.

GIVING

The respected member of many Indian cultures is the one who shares and gives all his wealth to others.

DOMINANT SOCIETY

TIME

Time is important. Time is of the utmost importance. When a person says he will be somewhere at 10:00 a.m., he must be there at 10:00. Otherwise, he is felt to be a person who "steals" another man's time. More and more, non-Indians rush. It is felt among this culture to be good to use "time" to its fullest extent.

TOMORROW CONCEPT

Non-Indians constantly are looking to tomorrow. Such items as insurance, savings for college, plans for vacation, etc., suggest to what extent non-Indians hold this value.

ACTION

The man who is admired is the one who is quick to act. He gets things done rapidly and moves on to the next thing. To sit idly and let one's competitor pass him by acting more quickly is considered bad business.

GUILT

After an act is committed that a non-Indian feels to be wrong, he carries inside him the knowledge of having done something wrong. This terrible feeling may make one ill mentally and physically.

SAVING

An individual with the quality of "thrift" is felt to have acquired a value worth much.

CULTURAL VALUES (Continued)

EXTENDED FAMILY

Aunts are often considered to be mothers. Uncles are called “fathers,” and cousins are brothers and sisters of the immediate family. Even clan members are considered relatives, so Indian cultures consider many more individuals to be relatives than do non-Indians.

AGE

Respect is for the elders. Experience is felt to bring knowledge. So the older one is, the more knowledgeable he is. No effort is made to conceal white hair or other signs of age.

FEW MATERIAL THINGS

Members of the tribe often are suspicious of individuals who collect many material possessions. Some tribes even hold celebrations and give away most of their possessions to others as “love gifts.” The Sioux enjoy such a practice.

MAN LIVES IN BALANCE WITH NATURE

The earth is here to enjoy. If man accepts this world as it is and lives as he should with it, there will not be sickness or lack of food.

FAMILY

Biological family is of the utmost importance, and relationships are limited within this group.

YOUTH

Thousands of dollars are spent yearly for hair dyes, make-up, and other items that make older people look younger. Even whole towns have sprung up in the United States, which advertise youthful living and that they are designed for “senior citizens.”

MATERIAL POSSESSIONS

One’s lifetime is often spent collecting material goods. Non-Indians are taught from an early age to value “possessions,” which are then handed down to family members from generation to generation. “Ownership” often equates to “success.”

MAN CONTROLS NATURE

Constantly this culture searches for new ways to control and master the elements around them. Artificial lakes are made; natural waters are controlled. Such accomplishments are looked upon with pride.